No. 47.

THERE IS NO CLOUD.

THESE were the words of a believer in Jesus. We record them here, and testify to her faithfulness in life, — her triumph in death, — that they who read may be stimulated to greater earnestness in prayer and endeavor to be like Christ.

Mrs. M. H. B., the subject of this sketch, died at New London, Conn., June 22, 1859, aged 48 years. She had consecrated herself in the morning of life to her Redeemer, and till the close of that life it was her chief aim to be always found doing his work.

About eighteen months before her own departure, she was called to drink deeply of the bitter cup of affliction, by the death of a most promising son of four years. "I'm going to be like HIM," were at one time the sweet words of the child. "Like whom?" he was asked. "Like Jesus," was the reply; and in four short weeks he was with Jesus, who loves little children. This chastening of the Lord, which cast a shadow over earth, made heaven more clear and bright, and by the blessing of God doubtless smoothed this Christian's rugged pathway home.

A few weeks before her death, she was asked concerning her state of mind, the remark being made that sometimes disease had a tendency to obscure the light in the soul of a Christian. She replied, "*There is no cloud*, — my trust seems to be very firm, and the love of Christ seems to be sufficient for me." At another

time she said, "Pray for me, that I may have patience. I hope Jesus will support me. He knows what it is to suffer pain, for he has felt it himself; but I have as yet suffered no pain worth naming." It was very evident, throughout her sickness, that she was learning, by glad experience, the truth of the words of Jesus, "My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness." And although she often repeated the request already mentioned, that her friends would pray that patience might be given to her, it was delightful to witness her sweet submission to the will of her Saviour. "It is happiness," she would say, "to have the heart and will wholly swallowed up in Jesus; oh, it is, indeed. Every bitter is made sweet." Again she said, "I am glad I've got as far through as I have." Then, fearing she had felt or expressed impatience, she added, "Oh, that was wrong; I'm sorry I said it, very sorry."

Her deep interest in the welfare of friends was shown by her frequent allusion to them. Speaking of one, she said, "I hope, I can't but hope that E—— has an interest in this grace." Her sense of unworthiness and her gratitude were often evinced by expressions like these: "It is a great thing to have fellowship with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ." "How helpless I am, but God is all in all." "I shall soon be at home. Jesus will come. What music,—what music there is in his name. How sweetly it sounds in my ear." "I am not fit to see Jesus, I am so unworthy." "Don't let us think about ourselves; let us think about Jesus." "Oh, depth of mercy! to rest on the bosom of my God."

At one time, in the progress of her disease, it became extremely difficult for her to swallow even the smallest

quantity of food or drink. "Jesus will feed me," she said. "He feeds me with the bread which cometh down from heaven." She was very grateful for every kindness to her. "How good you are to me,—I am so thankful," she often said. Upon one occasion, when she had evidently been thinking upon the kind offices of friends, which she could not but see were most gladly performed, she repeated the words, "Sick, and ye visited me;" and then, as if struck with the singular appropriateness of those words to her case, she exclaimed, with childlike wonder, "How came Jesus to think of those words?"

At one time, apparently contemplating her approaching death, she said, solemnly, "I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened until it be accomplished." "I am in the garden now." Her thoughts were of the Garden of Gethsemane, and our Saviour's struggle there, and she was strengthening herself for the coming trial by a remembrance of his sufferings.

When her last day arrived, and her strength was rapidly failing, her thoughts seemed to be wholly of Jesus. "He is *so* good," she said. "Come, Jesus." "He is mine." These and similar ejaculations were constantly heard, until her voice was hushed for this world, and her released spirit took its flight heavenward.

Christian reader, here is a lesson for *you*. Are you a living witness to the truth of the promises of Christ, to the efficacy of his blood? Is yours a religion, the reality of which is proclaimed not merely by your public confession of faith, but with still greater emphasis by your holy life? Before you is placed the perfect example of him who went about doing good. It

was the constant prayer of the believer whose death we have recorded, that she might think more of Jesus. Is he always in *your* thoughts, and are you daily becoming more like him? If this be true in your case, then your life is preaching the gospel as forcibly to some hearts, without doubt, as that gospel could be preached in a most impressive sermon. It is your prayer that when the summons shall come, yours may be a joyful response, — yours a happy death. Let it cheer you to remember always, that your walking with Christ in daily life affords the best assurance that he will walk with you through the valley of the shadow of death.

There is no cloud. Dear, thoughtless reader, can *you* look with the eye of faith upon the face of the Lord Jesus and say this? Or is that blessed face veiled by reason of your unfaithfulness?

Will you learn the lesson taught by the godly life and happy death of this humble Christian? It is your privilege to gain an experience as rich in love and mercy as was hers. Will you strive and pray for it? Thus shall you be blessed with the presence of him who hath said, "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee."

"And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them."

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